

## CLAIMS

We claim:

- 1           1. A monitor for a loss prevention system, comprising:
  - 2           an RF communication circuit adapted for communication with
  - 3           at least one radio frequency identification tag;
  - 4           a control circuit having a microprocessor and a memory, the
  - 5           control circuit being electrically connected to the RF
  - 6           communication circuit;
  - 7           an alarm electrically connected to the microcomputer; and
  - 8           a computer readable program code stored in the memory and
  - 9           executing under control of the microprocessor, the program code
  - 10          having:
    - 11           means for acquiring the identification tag by storing
    - 12           a unique identifier associated with the identification tag
    - 13           in the memory and associating the identifier with an alias;
    - 14           means for dropping the identification tag by deleting
    - 15           the unique identifier associated with the identification
    - 16           tag from the memory;
    - 17           means for operating the RF communication circuit to
    - 18           interrogate the identification tag; and

19 means for causing the alarm to activate when the  
20 identification tag is out of range of the RF communication  
21 circuit.

1 2. The monitor for a loss prevention system according to  
2 claim 1, wherein said RF communication circuit comprises a  
3 wireless network interface adapter.

1 3. The monitor for a loss prevention system according to  
2 claim 1, wherein said RF communication circuit comprises:

3 transmitting means for broadcasting an RF signal to the  
4 radio frequency identification tag; and

5 receiving means for receiving an RF signal from the radio  
6 frequency identification tag.

1 4. The monitor for a loss prevention system according to  
2 claim 3, further comprising adjusting means for adjusting the  
3 sensitivity of said receiving means.

1 5. The monitor for a loss prevention system according to  
2 claim 3, further comprising adjusting means for adjusting the  
3 signal strength of said transmitting means.

1           6. The monitor for a loss prevention system according to  
2 claim 1, further comprising a housing containing said RF  
3 communication circuit and said control circuit.

1           7. The monitor for a loss prevention system according to  
2 claim 6, further comprising a belt clip.

1           8. The monitor for a loss prevention system according to  
2 claim 1, further comprising user interface means for displaying  
3 messages to and receiving input from a user, the user interface  
4 means being electrically connected to said control circuit.

1           9. The monitor for a loss prevention system according to  
2 claim 8, further comprising a housing containing said RF  
3 communication circuit, said control circuit, and said user  
4 interface means.

1           10. The monitor for a loss prevention system according to  
2 claim 9, further comprising a belt clip.

1           11. The monitor for a loss prevention system according to  
2 claim 1, wherein said program code further comprises adjusting  
3 means for adjusting the sensitivity of said RF communication  
4 circuit.

1 . 12. The monitor for a loss prevention system according to  
2 claim 1, wherein said alarm is an audible alarm.

1 13. The monitor for a loss prevention system according to  
2 claim 1, wherein said alarm is a visual alarm.

1 14. The monitor for a loss prevention system according to  
2 claim 1, wherein said alarm is a tactile alarm.

1 15. The monitor for a loss prevention system according to  
2 claim 1, wherein said program code further comprises means for  
3 controlling an operating range of said RF communication circuit.

1 16. The monitor for a loss prevention system according to  
2 claim 1, wherein said program code further comprises means for  
3 dropping the identification tag.

1 17. A loss prevention system, comprising:

2 (a) a monitor having:

3 (i) a control circuit including a microprocessor and a  
4 memory;

5 (ii) a radio frequency communication circuit connected  
6 to the control circuit, including a transmitter and a  
7 receiver;

8 (iii) program code stored in the control circuit memory  
9 and executing under control of the microprocessor, the  
10 program code including:

11 (A) means for causing an interrogation signal to be  
12 transmitted by the transmitter;

13 (B) means for acquiring an identification tag number  
14 from a response to the interrogation signal, including  
15 storing the acquired tag number and associating an  
16 alias with the acquired tag number;

17 (c) means for repetitively transmitting the  
18 interrogation signal, and for tracking responses to the  
19 interrogation signal, including comparing responses to  
20 the acquired tag number;

21 (D) means for generating an alarm when the tracked  
22 responses fail to include the acquired tag number; and

23 (E) means for dropping the acquired identification tag  
24 number from memory; and

25 (b) at least one radio frequency identification tag adapted  
26 for attachment to an article to be tracked, the tag having:

27 (i) a memory having a unique identification number  
28 stored therein; and

29 (ii) transponder means for receiving the interrogation  
30 signal transmitted by the monitor and transmitting the  
31 unique identification number in response to the  
32 interrogation signal.

1 18. The loss prevention system according to claim 17,  
2 further comprising a housing, said RF communication circuit and  
3 said control circuit being disposed within the housing, the  
4 housing being dimensioned and configured for transport upon a  
5 user's person, whereby said monitor is portable.

1 19. The loss prevention system according to claim 17,  
2 wherein said monitor and said radio frequency identification tag  
3 both further comprise means for communication in a wireless  
4 personal area network.